

What is Claimed is:

1.

A method for creating a multi-colored engraving having contiguous color regions on a ceramic surface, said method comprising:

- a) selecting a design having an area of contiguous regions comprising a plurality of different colors to be engraved on said ceramic surface,
- 5 b) selecting a first area on said ceramic surface for engaging a first color region,
- c) placing a first masking member over said ceramic surface at said first area, said first masking member defining a first opening having an outline approximating a dimension of said first color region,
- d) depositing an amount of a first coloring agent on said ceramic surface
- 10 through said first masking member on said first area to be engraved,
- e) heating and melting said first coloring agent to cause it to fuse into said ceramic surface at said first area and thereafter removing said first masking member to leave a colored engraved mark comprising a first color region in said ceramic surface,
- f) selecting a second area on said ceramic surface for engraving a second color
- 15 region,
- g) placing a second masking member over said ceramic surface at said second area, said second masking member defining a second opening having an outline approximating a dimension of said second color region,
- h) depositing an amount of a second coloring agent on said ceramic surface
- 20 through said second masking member on said second area to be engraved, and

i) heating and melting said second coloring agent to cause it to fuse into said ceramic surface at said second area and thereafter removing said second masking member to leave a colored engraved mark comprising a second color region in said ceramic surface, said second color region being contiguously adjacent to said first color region.

2.

The method according to Claim 1 in which said coloring agent comprises colored glass frit.

3.

The method according to Claim 1 in which additional color regions are engraved into said marking area by placing additional masking members over said ceramic surface at said marking area, said additional masking members each defining a further opening having an outline approximating a dimension of said respective additional color region, depositing an amount of a respective additional coloring agent on said ceramic surface through said additional masking members on said area to be engraved, heating and melting said additional coloring agents to cause them to fuse into said ceramic surface at said engraved area and thereafter removing said additional masking members to leave a colored engraved mark comprising said additional color regions in said ceramic surface, said additional color regions being contiguously adjacent to at least one of said first and second color regions.

4.

The method according to Claim 1 in which grooves are cut into said ceramic surface at each of said areas of color regions to be engraved prior to depositing said coloring agents, whereby an exposed ceramic surface in said grooves serve as a substratum on which said coloring agents are deposited.

5.

The method according to Claim 4 in which said colored engraved mark has a depth extending below said ceramic surface such that said mark is recessed below said ceramic surface.

6.

The method according to Claim 1 in which a laser is used to heat and melt said coloring agents.

7.

The method according to Claim 4 in which a laser is used to cut said groove into said ceramic surface and to heat and melt said coloring agent.

8.

The method according to claim 1 in which said masking members are comprised of stainless steel.

9.

The method according to claim 1 in which said masking members are comprised of a polymer material.

10.

A method for creating a multi-colored engraving having contiguous color regions on a ceramic surface, said method comprising:

a) selecting a design having contiguous regions comprising a plurality of different colors to be engraved on said ceramic surface,

5 b) selecting a first area on said ceramic surface for engraving a first color region,

- c) placing a first masking member over said ceramic surface at said first area, said first masking member defining a first opening having an outline approximating a dimension of said first color region,
- 10 d) applying a laser to said ceramic surface over said first area to cut a first groove into said ceramic surface for receiving a first coloring agent,
- e) depositing through said first masking member an amount of said first coloring agent in said first groove,
- f) heating and melting said first coloring agent to cause it to fuse into said first
- 15 groove in said ceramic surface at said first area and thereafter removing said first masking member to leave a colored engraved mark comprising a first color region in said ceramic surface,
- g) selecting a second area on said ceramic surface for engraving a second color region,
- 20 h) placing a second masking member over said ceramic surface at said second area, said second masking member defining a second opening having an outline approximating a dimension of said second color region,
- i) applying a laser to said ceramic surface over said second area to cut a second groove into said ceramic surface for receiving a second coloring agent,
- 25 j) depositing through said second masking member an amount of said second coloring agent in said second groove, and
- k) heating and melting said second coloring agent to cause it to fuse into said second groove in said ceramic surface at said second area and thereafter removing said second masking member to leave a colored engraved mark comprising a second color region

30 in said ceramic surface, said second color region being contiguously adjacent to said first color region.

11.

The method according to Claim 10 in which said colored engraved mark has a depth extending below said ceramic surface such that said mark is recessed below said ceramic surface.

12.

The method according to Claim 10 in which said coloring agent comprises colored glass frit.

13.

The method according to claim 10 in which said masking members are comprised of a polymer material.

14.

The method according to claim 13 in which said masking members are created simultaneously with the cutting of said grooves in said ceramic surface by placing a sheet of polymer material on said ceramic surface prior to cutting said groove, applying said laser over said area to be engraved to cut through said polymer material simultaneously as said
5 laser cuts said ceramic surface, such that said openings corresponding to said color regions are created in said polymer material to produce said masking members.

15.

A method for creating a colored engraving on a ceramic surface, said method comprising:

a) selecting an area to be engraved on said ceramic surface,

b) cutting a groove into said ceramic surface at said area to be engraved,
5 whereby an exposed ceramic surface in said groove serves as a substratum on which a coloring is deposited.

c) depositing an amount of said coloring agent on said ceramic surface over said area to be engraved, and

d) heating and melting said coloring agent to cause it to fuse into said ceramic
10 surface at said area to leave a colored engraved mark in said ceramic surface.

16.

The method according to Claim 15 in which said coloring agent comprises colored glass frit.

17.

The method according to Claim 15 in which said colored engraved mark has a depth extending below said ceramic surface such that said mark is recessed below said ceramic surface.

18.

A ceramic brick having a multi-colored design engraved on its exterior surface, said colored design comprising a fusion of a plurality of coloring agents with an outer ceramic layer of said brick, said colored design comprising contiguous regions of different colors corresponding to said coloring agents.

19.

The ceramic brick of claim 18 in which said coloring agent comprises glass frit.

20.

The ceramic brick of claim 18 in which said colored engraved mark has a depth extending below said ceramic surface such that said mark is recessed below said ceramic surface.

21.

The ceramic brick of claim 20 in which said colored engraved mark is disposed in a groove in said brick surface, said groove being created by a laser, and fusion of said coloring agent with said ceramic surface is effected by heating by laser.